

**Lake Ouachita
Citizens Focus Committee**

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

DATE: 12 April 2004

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Lake Ouachita Citizens Focus Committee (LOCFC) Meeting.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:02pm, Ouachita Project Management Office, Arnold Habig,
Chairperson

Attendees:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Richard D. Stokes, Park Manager, Lake Ouachita Field Office
Titus V. Hardiman, Park Ranger Supervisor Office Manager, Lake Ouachita Field Office
Johnny Cantrell, Ouachita Project Biologist
Pamela Rowland, Natural Resource Ranger, Lake Ouachita Field Office

Members Present:

Al Behm
Dave Doty
Rick Farmer
Al Gathright
Arnie Habig
Steve Laney
Mike Misch
Dan Mobley
Jerry Shields
Jerry Williams
Bill Barnes
Patty Roddenberry
Howard Wright
Joy Pensinger
Doug Johnson

Announcements:

Arnie Habig discussed having a brief meeting after tonight's meeting with the Fisheries and Campground Subcommittee.

Minutes Review:

Minutes from March 08, 2004, were approved with the following correction; 2nd page statement of 501.3.C to 501.C.3.

Aquatic Weed Control Status: Rick Stokes gave a briefing on the plans for the \$140,000, and stated Col. Clapp has talked with Sen. Ross about the \$140,000 and elaborated on the plans to spend \$120,000 in aquatic vegetation research money, leaving \$20,000 as a buffer for unforeseen costs.

Habig stated Bill Barnes visited Washington D.C and in a visit with Ross and Lincoln had requested an additional \$300,000 for subsequent years.

Aquatic Vegetation Control Program: Johnny Cantrell began with a power point program showing the Pakistanae fly from its larva stage to its adult stage. The presentation also showed actual results of the feeding process. Cantrell informed the group that new P-Fly ponds are being built in the Lake Ouachita Maintenance Compound and are presently only in the dirt work construction phase. These ponds will house the Flies to be distributed into Lake Ouachita. Once completed the ponds will have enough flies in them to consume about 2 tons of hydrilla per week.

Cantrell and Rowland then passed out samples of egeria and hydrilla and gave a hands on demonstration with the members to show them the differences. Maps were also brought in to highlight the locations of infestations. Information brochures on the P-Flies were also handed out.

Plans are to infest the lake with approximately 500K P-Flies per year.

The LOCFC members commended the duo on an excellent presentation.

Denby Trail and Hwy 270 Bridge Relocation Project: Jerry Shields: A letter, signed by Rick Stokes, Park Manager, Lake Ouachita Field Office, Arnie Habig, Chairman, LOCFC, Phillip Carr, President, Mt. Ida Chamber of Commerce, Ted Elder, County Judge, Montgomery County, and David White, Mayor, Mt. Ida, was written to Dan Flowers of the Arkansas Hwy Transportation Dept. Shields requested that a meeting be held between the Forest Service and the Corps. Rick Stokes stated that the amount of red tape that is sometimes involved in dealing with archeological, land issues and environmental concerns could cause some delays and he would contact Bob Raines with the Forest Service.

Stokes stated that he had additional information on the fishing pier. The AG&F will need to have an 80/20 split for the pier the agency could not accept money from another Government Agency. He was unaware of this policy. However a new program called the Handshake Initiative may be a tool that the Corps can use to get the funds to the AG&F through the Mt. Ida Chamber of Commerce, Montgomery County.

Subcommittees:

Advocacy: Al Gathright stated the disks that his student aids were working on was given to him but when he tried to open it, he found that it was write protected and not usable. He would have to get with the student aids when they returned.

Public Relations: Arnold Habig stated that he would prefer the draft for the Day Use Annual Pass letter be sent to the local paper. Patty Roddenberry made a motion to send the letter for distribution to the local news media by May 2, 2004. After some discussion David Doty seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Bill Barnes stated the marine sanitation inspections could begin as soon as Memorial Day. Rep. Ross and Sen. Lincoln are very aware of the deferred maintenance that exists at Lake Ouachita and. They have asked for \$1 Million per year for the Ouachita Project.

Fisheries & Campground: Arnold Habig stated that there was nothing to report at this time.

Master Plan & EIS: Jerry Williams stated that his committee has not met yet. Habig, Williams and Doty scheduled a meeting for Saturday, April 17, 2004, 2:00pm at Brady Mountain Campground. Williams requested a copy of the 1980 Master Plan. Habig stated he would bring a copy to the meeting.

Watershed Quality Maintenance: Mike Misch (postponed till next meeting).

Comments:

Rick Stokes mentioned that the Crystal Springs Wastewater Treatment Plant is now fixed. The project used a large amount of welding and is only considered temporary. The Crystal Springs repairs were overshadowed by the Little Fir plant that went down about a week ago but went back online today.

Stokes proceeded to talk about the constant problems with the electricity in the campgrounds. Old wiring is also another deferred maintenance item.

Bill Barnes stated Sen. Ross feels there is strong support for the aquatic weed control using natural predators and as long as there is a foreseeable end to the problem. Ross indicated there maybe \$300,000 in the 2005 budget for Aquatic Weed Control. A request has also been made that would require 80% of fish caught be left in the lakes.

Bill stated the Lake Ouachita Concessionaire's Association group also brought up the strong need to address the 20+ years of deferred maintenance. He stated that there seemed to be strong support for turn-back funding from the recreation programs. Barnes said that a figure of \$1million per year per lake was looked at by the delegates but support for the funds would only be there if there was some type of an end to the additional funding.

Stokes stated that General Crear will be the new Division Engineer of the MVD. Behm stated that now would be the time to get Crear on board with the funding issue. Barnes stated that he would be willing to visit with Crear if it is arranged.

Habig interjected that the 70% turn-back money could possibly be going to NRRS, which is not what we want. Also, the rangers should be protected from being ousted, as done to NPS, in the event of outsourcing.

Shields interjected the funds that come from hydropower production should come back in some form or fashion based on the amount of operational electricity that is sold from Blakely Dam. Barnes talked about the obstacle that Southwest Power Administration held when the topic of low flows was brought up in Washington. It was a topic that was

best left unsaid at the time. Stokes explained that SWPA said that it does turn-back dollar-per-dollar for items relating to the dam and power production, but he didn't discourage the group from trying.

Gathright stated that Bill Fletcher was on a petition to be the new Commissioner for the AG&F. He is a local man from Hot Springs and asked that LOCFC write a letter to Governor Huckabee supporting Fletcher.

Habig asked Johnson and Pensinger to select the subcommittees they desired to work on and let the subcommittee chairperson know.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 8:47pm.

A Fisheries and Recreation Subcommittee meeting was held after the regular LOCFC meeting.